

Ex-treasurer for Rep. George Santos pleads guilty to conspiracy, tells of bogus loan and fake donors

By Jake Offenhartz
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The ex-treasurer for U.S. Rep. George Santos pleaded guilty Thursday to a fraud conspiracy charge and implicated the indicted New York Republican in a scheme to embellish his campaign finance reports with a fake loan and fake donors.

Nancy Marks, who was a close aide to Santos during his two congressional bids, entered the plea at a federal courthouse on Long Island, where she was a longtime political operative and bookkeeper for multiple candidates.

Speaking to the judge, Marks said that among other things, she and Santos had submitted bogus campaign finance reports falsely saying he had loaned his campaign \$500,000 even though in reality he didn't have that kind of money and the loan didn't exist. She said the purpose of the fake loan was to make it look like he was richer than he really was, which might attract other donors including a Republican committee.



Nancy Marks leaves federal court, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023, in Central Islip, N.Y.

(AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)
Page 2

Continued on Page 2



QUALITY APARTMENTS
AND SUITES



www.arubaqualityapartments.com

All Fully Furnished w/Kitchen, Airco, Cable Tv, FREE WIFI (in and outside rooms).
Swimming Pool, Gym, Library, Laundry Room & BBQ Sets.
Less than 1 mile from Eagle Beach & 2 Large Supermarkets.

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OR VISIT US.
Mon-Fri: 8am - 7pm. Sat & Sun: 9am - 5pm. Worldwide calls: (297)-582-0697
Calls from USA & Canada: 1-888-415-1095 (toll free)
Calls from The Netherlands: 085-009-0218 (toll free)
Schotlandstraat 70, Oranjestad, Aruba

Email: info@arubaqualityapartments.com | Whatsapp: (297) 734-3008
Website: www.arubaqualityapartments.com



For the BEST & the BIGGEST Steak
and so much more!

f i

Lobby Bar Menu



FRIDAYS
2 FOR 1 Sangria

Lunch Special
EVERYDAY 11:30AM - 5PM



\$28.90 + 15% SC
TAX IS INCLUDED.

Local Deal
SATURDAY



15% OFF For Locals

Open daily from 11:30am - 11pm. Mondays Closed. Wilhelminastraat #80. Oranjestad, Aruba. Phone: +297 582-3677 • www.elgaucho-aruba.com

Ex-treasurer for Rep. George Santos pleads guilty to conspiracy, tells of bogus loan and fake donors

Continued from Front

Reading from a prepared statement, Marks also said she had provided the Federal Elections Commission with a fake list of people who had supposedly given money to the campaign.

"The donors, who are real people, didn't give me permission to use their names," Marks said in court.

Her plea agreement comes with a recommendation that she serve 3 1/2 years to 4 years in prison.

Outside the courthouse, Marks' lawyer said that while his client had not formally entered into a cooperation agreement with prosecutors, she would be willing to testify against him if asked.

"If we get a subpoena we'll do the right thing," said the attorney, Ray Perini. He said Santos had "mentally seduced," his client.

"There's a manipulation involved that had to do with her family and the death of her husband," Perini said, declining to elaborate. "There were lies told."

Any such testimony could be a severe blow to the congressman, who faces separate charges that he embezzled money from his campaign, lied in financial disclosures submitted to Congress and received unemployment funds when he



Rep. George Santos, R-N.Y., speaks to reporters just after House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's last-ditch plan to keep the government temporarily open collapsed, at the Capitol in Washington, Friday, Sept. 29, 2023.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

wasn't eligible.

An attorney for Santos, Joseph Murray, attended the court hearing and said afterward that he expected Marks was cooperating with the government. A congressional spokesperson for Santos declined to comment. Marks resigned as Santos' treasurer amid growing questions about his campaign finances and revelations that the Republican had fabricated much of his life story. After his election, news reporters revealed that Santos had made up stories about where he went to college and where he worked, telling people he was a Wall Street dealmaker with a real estate portfolio when he was actually struggling financially had had faced eviction from

multiple apartments. Santos also lied about his heritage, saying he was Jewish, when he wasn't.

Santos has acknowledged embellishing his resume, but has accused people of overreacting.

Santos faces a 13-count federal indictment centered on charges of money laundering and lying to Congress about his wealth in a financial disclosure.

Marks had not previously been charged. Thursday marked her first appearance in court.

The investigation of Santos, a first-term congressman, has also engulfed Marks, a key behind-the-scenes figure in Long Island Republican politics who built a business as a treasurer and consultant

to dozens of local, state and federal candidates.

Marks has faced questions about the congressman's unusual campaign filings, including a series of \$199.99 expenses, just below the legal limit for disclosure. Santos, in turn, has sought to pin the blame for his unexplained finances on Marks, who he claims "went rogue" without his knowledge.

While Santos has admitted fabricating key parts about his purported background as a wealthy, well-educated businessman, questions remain about what he did for work. Reporters had questioned the source of more than \$700,000 he initially claimed to have loaned his campaign from his own personal fortune.

Santos has pleaded not guilty to charges he duped donors, stole from his campaign and lied to Congress about being a millionaire, all while cheating to collect unemployment benefits he didn't deserve. He has defied calls to resign.

Besides Santos, Marks' most high-profile client was former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin of New York, an ally of Donald Trump. She was Zeldin's bookkeeper when he unsuccessfully ran for governor in 2022.

Marks, besides being responsible for keeping Santos' campaign books and

handling his regulatory filings, had unusual business ties to Santos, according to public records.

In 2021, she was listed as being a member of a political consulting firm incorporated in Florida, whose other members included Santos' company and people who had formerly been affiliated with an investment company that had been shut down by the Securities and Exchange Commission over allegations that it was a Ponzi scheme. When Santos was indicted, Marks wasn't mentioned by name in court filings. But the indictment described an unnamed political consultant who it said had helped dupe donors who gave money that they thought was going to the campaign but was instead siphoned off for Santos' personal use.

Marks is the second person besides Santos to face charges in connection with the campaign. In August, a former Santos fundraiser, Sam Miele, was indicted on federal charges that he impersonated the then-chief of staff to GOP Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California, who at the time was the House minority leader.

Miele pleaded not guilty. His attorney, Kevin Marino, had predicted that his client would be exonerated at trial. □



A sign announces newly built homes in Sudbury, Ma., on March 12, 2023. On Thursday, Freddie Mac reports on this week's average U.S. mortgage rates.

(AP Photo/Peter Morgan, File)

By Alex Veiga
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The

cost of financing a home surged again this week as the average long-term U.S.

The average long-term US mortgage rate surges to 7.49%, its highest level since December 2000

mortgage rate climbed to its highest level since December 2000, further dimming the affordability outlook for many would-be homebuyers.

The average rate on the benchmark 30-year home loan rose to 7.49% from 7.31% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. A year ago, the rate averaged 6.66%.

Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages, popular with homeowners refi-

nancing their home loan, also increased. The average rate rose to 6.78% from 6.72% last week. A year ago, it averaged 5.90%, Freddie Mac said.

High rates can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, limiting how much they can afford in a market already out of reach for many Americans. They also discourage homeowners who locked in rock-bottom rates two years ago from selling. The

average rate on a 30-year mortgage is now more than double what it was two years ago, when it was just 2.99%.

The combination of elevated rates and low home inventory has worsened the affordability crunch by keeping home prices near all-time highs even as sales of previously occupied U.S. homes have fallen 21% through the first eight months of this year versus the same stretch in 2022. □

Maryland Supreme Court weighs victims' rights in case of Adnan Syed from 'Serial' podcast

By Brian White and Lea Skene

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Maryland's highest court is considering whether the rights of a murder victim's family were violated when Adnan Syed's conviction in the killing was vacated last fall, years after his case gained national attention through the hit podcast "Serial."

The case has been fraught with legal twists and divided court rulings for decades. And the oral arguments that took place Thursday before the Maryland Supreme Court were no exception.

Among the issues discussed was the extent to which Maryland crime victims have a right to participate in hearings where a conviction could be vacated. The panel of seven judges, who will release their ruling in the coming months, is also weighing whether to uphold a lower appellate court ruling that found in favor of the victim's family and reinstated Syed's 2000 murder conviction.

Ultimately, Syed's freedom hangs in the balance. While unlikely, he could eventually be sent back to



Adnan Syed and his mother Shamim Rahman arrive at Maryland's Supreme Court in Annapolis, Md., Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023, to hear arguments in an appeal by Syed, whose conviction for killing his ex-girlfriend more than 20 years ago was chronicled in the hit podcast "Serial."

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

prison for life if subsequent developments in the case don't fall in his favor.

Outside the Annapolis courthouse after the hearing, Syed said he was looking forward to the decision. While maintaining his innocence from the start, Syed has often expressed concern for the family of Hae Min Lee, his high school ex-girlfriend who was found strangled to death and buried in an unmarked

grave in 1999. "We believe very strongly in trying to find justice for Hae and her family," he told reporters. "And we're hoping also that we're able to find justice for us, too."

He attended the hearing flanked by family members, including his mother and younger brother.

Syed, 42, was released from prison in September 2022, when a Baltimore judge overturned his con-

viction. City prosecutors had dropped all charges after finding flaws in the evidence.

Syed appealed his conviction's reinstatement, and the Lee family also appealed to the state's highest court, contending that crime victims should be given a larger role in the process of vacating a conviction.

He said the issue at hand was whether the rights of

Lee's brother, Young Lee, were violated because he was unable to substantively participate in the process, which Rubin called extraordinary "in that it aligns the interests of the defendant and the state." He argued victims and their attorneys should fulfill an adversarial role. But several justices expressed skepticism about whether state law expressly spells out a victim's right to be heard in such hearings where a conviction is vacated.

Some justices also questioned why the hearing that vacated Syed's conviction was scheduled so hastily. Prosecutors told Young Lee about the hearing on a Friday and scheduled it for the following Monday, leaving him no reasonable opportunity to travel to Baltimore from his California home and attend in person. Instead, he ended up addressing the court via video call.

Justice Shirley Watts said the outcome of the hearing seemed predetermined, including Syed's immediate release from custody. And Justice Lynne Battaglia spoke about properly balancing the rights of victims and defendants. □

A man seeking Wisconsin's governor illegally brought guns to the state Capitol — twice in one day

By Scott Bauer

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A man illegally brought a loaded handgun into the Wisconsin Capitol, demanding to see Gov. Tony Evers, and returned at night with an assault rifle after posting bail, police said Thursday.

The man, who was shirtless and had a holstered handgun, approached the governor's office on the first floor of the Capitol around 2 p.m. Wednesday, state Department of Administration spokesperson Tatyana

Warrick said. The 43-year-old man said "he would not leave until he saw Governor Evers" so he could talk about "domestic abuse towards men," Capitol police said in a bulletin sent to lawmakers and their staffs. Evers was not in the building at the time, Warrick said. A Capitol police officer sits at a desk outside of a suite of rooms that includes the governor's office, conference room and offices for the attorney general.

The man was taken into custody for openly carrying a firearm in the Capitol,

which is against the law, Warrick said. Weapons can be brought into the Capitol if they are concealed and the person has a valid permit. The man arrested did not have a concealed carry permit, Warrick said. The man posted cellphone video of his arrest on his Facebook page, which one of his Facebook friends downloaded and provided to The Associated Press. In the footage, the man tells police as they speak to him outside of the governor's office that he is armed "to defend myself" from



Wisconsin Democratic Gov. Tony Evers speaks at a campaign stop, Oct. 27, 2022, in Milwaukee.

(AP Photo/Morry Gash, File)

people who he says police won't protect him from.

"I am not a threat," the man tells police. His dog is with him.

When told by officers that it's illegal for him to openly carry a firearm in the Capi-

tol, the man says, "I will admit that I broke that law." Warrick said she was not aware of the video and could not comment on it. The man was booked into the Dane County Jail but later posted bail. □

Biden administration is resuming deportation flights for Venezuelan migrants as arrivals grow

By Mark Stevenson, Michael Balsamo and Colleen Long

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Biden administration will resume deporting Venezuelan migrants, the largest single group encountered at the U.S.-Mexico border last month, back to their economically troubled country as their arrivals continue to grow. The process is expected to begin shortly, said two U.S. officials, though they did not provide specific details on when the flights would begin taking off. The officials were not authorized to disclose details of the government's plan and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

The resumption of deportation comes not long after the administration increased protected status for Venezuelans who arrive to the U.S., so if someone arrived to the U.S. before July 31 of this year, but not after, they'd be eligible for protections. The decision



Migrants heading north line up to take a boat, in Bajo Chiquito, Darien province, Panama, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023, after walking across the Darien Gap from Colombia.

(AP Photo/Arnulfo Franco)

reflects the larger strategy by President Joe Biden to not only provide expanded legal pathways for people arriving, but also to crack down on those who illegally cross into the country from Mexico. The officials would not discuss details about

how frequently deportation flights would be going to Venezuela or describe how Venezuela agreed to accept back their citizens except to say that, like other countries around the world, the U.S. has long encouraged Venezuela to

accept back its nationals. Cuba, another U.S. adversary, announced earlier this year that it would begin accepting Cuban deportees but there has only been one flight a month. The U.S. had been returning some Venezuelans via

commercial flights, but in relatively small numbers and through third countries. In Venezuela, the government said it had reached an agreement with U.S. officials for a safe and orderly repatriation.

"Venezuelan migration in recent years is a direct result of the application of unilateral coercive measures and a blockade of our economy," Venezuela's foreign ministry said via X, the platform formerly known as Twitter. It said the government would deploy a program to support repatriated Venezuelans.

The U.S. move is the latest effort to deal with swelling numbers of migrants as the administration comes under increasing pressure from Republicans and mayors from the president's own party to do more to slow arrivals.

The announcement came as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other top Biden administration officials met with their counterparts in Mexico City. □



Trump Organization senior vice president and controller Jeffrey McConney returns to the courthouse after a break in the company's trial on Nov. 1, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

By Michael R. Sisak and Jennifer Peltz

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump has said he never thought his yearly financial statements "would be taken very seriously." But evidence Thursday at his New York civil fraud trial showed the statements were integral to some of his business

empire's loan deals.

A state lawyer showed letters that former Trump company controller Jeffrey McConney sent to a bank, saying he was providing Trump's 2015 and 2016 financial statements as required under the conditions of a loan for his Seven Springs estate north of New York City.

McConney was the first ex-

Evidence at New York fraud trial shows that Trump's financial statements were key to a loan deal

insider from the Trump Organization to testify at the trial, where New York Attorney General Letitia James is alleging that Trump and his business deceived banks, insurers and others with fraudulent financial statements that vastly overvalued Trump Tower, Mar-a-Lago and other assets. Trump denies any wrongdoing and says James, a Democrat, is just trying to damage his 2024 presidential campaign. He's leading the Republican field.

Trump himself didn't attend the proceedings Thursday, after choosing to be there — and avail himself of the news cameras waiting outside — for the three prior days. Trump said in pretrial testimony that he never felt

the financial statements "would be taken very seriously." People who did business with him were given ample warning not to trust them, he said.

James, however, has said the statements were the crux of "persistent and repeated fraud."

McConney worked at the Trump Organization from 1987 until this past February and had deep knowledge of the company's transactions. At the company's criminal tax fraud trial last year, McConney admitted breaking the law to help fellow executives avoid taxes on company-paid perks, including by filing false tax returns and failing to report the benefits to tax authorities. He was grant-

ed immunity to testify for the prosecution in the trial, which ended in the company's conviction. Trump himself wasn't charged in that case.

McConney took the stand at the current civil trial after days of testimony from two accountants who worked on the financial statements. James' legal team sought to demonstrate that Trump and his company had complete control over the preparation of the statements, with the outside accountants relying on information the Trump Organization provided. The defense tried to show that if there were problems with the financial statements, the flubs were accountant Donald Bender's fault. □

NYC mayor to residents of Puebla, Mexico: 'Mi casa es su casa,' but 'there's no more room'

By Daniel Shailer
Associated Press

PUEBLA, Mexico (AP) — New York City Mayor Eric Adams brought a mix of messages to central Mexico's Puebla state on Thursday, as he tried to carefully walk the line of mayor of a city known for welcoming migrants from around the world, but currently struggling with a continuing influx of asylum seekers. Inside Puebla's ornate state congress building, decked floor-to-ceiling in cream-yellow Portuguese tiles broken only by Greco-Roman columns, Adams focused on the ties binding his city and a Mexican state that has sent some 800,000 of its people to New York over the years.

But later, talking to reporters, Adams again returned to the refrain that he has carried on his Latin America trip: New York is "at capacity." "We are neighbors. We are familia. Mi casa es su casa. Your struggles are my struggles," Adams said inside the legislative chamber shortly after the state governor dubbed him "Mayor of Puebla York." "(Migrants) are our future and we cannot lose one of them," said Adams. Speaking to reporters im-



New York Mayor Eric Adams sits with AT&T Mexico CEO Monica Aspe during a forum by the US - Mexico Foundation in Mexico City, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023.

(AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

mediately afterwards, however, the mayor was more direct. "There is no more room in New York. Our hearts are endless, but our resources are not," he said. "We don't want to put people in congregate shelters. We don't want people to think they will be employed." Adams said around 800,000 immigrants from the state of Puebla live in New York City, which has had to absorb over 120,000 more asy-

lum seekers in the last year. Late Tuesday, New York City asked a court for the ability to suspend its unique, so-called "right to shelter" agreement that requires it to provide emergency housing to anyone who asks for it. The filing is the latest in a monthslong attempt to suspend the law which has long made New York a sanctuary city. On Tuesday the Adams administration argued the agreement

was never designed for a humanitarian crisis like the city faces today. Adams said the current crisis has been partly caused by what he called Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's "inhuman" decision last April to send migrants on chartered buses from his state to New York City. "These are human beings that have traveled in very dangerous terrains. And what he's doing is exploiting this for political rea-

sons," said Adams. In his address to Puebla's state congress earlier, the mayor emphasized the role of New York City's migrant community during the pandemic. "During COVID-19 it was your children that kept our stores open, the first responders, transportation professionals, healthcare professionals," he said. "We survived COVID because your children were in our city." After the speeches by Puebla's governor and the city mayor, members of congress began chanting "Adams hermano, ya eres poblano," a welcome which translates to "Brother Adams, you are already a Pueblan."

The mayor began a four-day tour of Latin America on Wednesday evening with a visit to the Basilica of Guadalupe, in Mexico City, a place of worship for many would-be migrants immediately before they begin their journey north. Over the next two days Adams plans to travel to Quito, Ecuador, and Bogota, Colombia, before visiting the jungle-clad Darien Gap, a particularly dangerous section of the route many migrants take north at the border of Panama and Colombia. □

Spanish charity protests Italy's impounding of rescue ship for multiple rescues

Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — Italy has impounded the Spanish charity rescue ship Open Arms for violating rules by Italy's right-wing government banning multiple rescues at sea, the charity said Thursday. The boat is blocked from leaving the port of Carrara in Tuscany for 20 days and the charity has been levied a fine of between 3,000 and 10,000 euros (\$3,200-\$10,500), the charity Open Arms said. Open Arms called the sanctions a violation of the law of the sea that requires boats to rescue people in distress. It said it was being punished for rescuing 176

people in three operations, including people of "extreme vulnerability." Italy assigned a port after the first two rescues of 69 people in international waters Saturday. Open Arms said it then received a mayday call from the Seabird aerial surveillance charity that another migrant boat was in danger, overcrowded with 109 people. After ascertaining its ship was the only rescue boat in the area, Open Arms said, it informed authorities that the craft would head to the overcrowded vessel, which was about 20 nautical miles, or two hours sailing, away. The charity said its cap-

tain was questioned for six hours and the boat was impounded after arriving in Carrara, the port it had been assigned. The government made no statements about the action. Premier Giorgia Meloni is in Granada, Spain, for a summit where she is pushing her European Union partners to come up with policies to block illegal migration across the Mediterranean Sea from northern Africa. It is the second time that the Open Arms ship has been temporarily impounded. It and two other charity rescue boats were impounded over three days in August.



Migrants swim next to their overturned wooden boat during a rescue operation by Spanish NGO Open Arms at south of the Italian Lampedusa island at the Mediterranean sea, Aug. 11, 2022.

(AP Photo/Francisco Seco, File)

Meloni has vowed to take "extraordinary measures" to deal with an influx of migrants. According to Interior Ministry statistics at mid-

September, nearly 126,000 people had arrived in Italy so far by boat this year, compared to 66,000 in the same period of 2022. □

US resumes some food aid deliveries to Ethiopia after assistance was halted over 'widespread' theft

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) —

The United States Agency for International Development said Thursday it is resuming food deliveries to hundreds of thousands of refugees in Ethiopia, four months after assistance was halted over a widespread scheme to steal supplies.

The decision was made after Ethiopia's government agreed to remove itself from the dispatch, storage and distribution of refugee food supplies, a USAID spokesperson said. Food aid will be restored to roughly 1 million refugees from Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and elsewhere.

However, food assistance has not resumed for the 20.1 million Ethiopians who rely on it as the country grapples with internal conflict and drought.

The agency also said it has implemented measures in-



An Ethiopian woman scoops up portions of wheat to be allocated to each waiting family after it was distributed by the Relief Society of Tigray in the town of Agula, in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia on May 8, 2021.

(AP Photo/Ben Curtis, File)

cluding biometric tests and GPS tracking across its operations worldwide to help address risks of diversion and to "help ensure food

assistance gets to those who need it most."

"We continue to work with the Ethiopian government on additional reforms that

will help ensure that assistance is provided based on assessed vulnerability and need, consistent with international best practice," the

USAID spokesperson said. USAID and the United Nations World Food Program in June halted all food aid to Ethiopia after an internal investigation found donated food intended for millions of hungry people there was being diverted on a "widespread" scale. Both agencies had already paused food assistance to the war-torn province of Tigray in March.

At the time, USAID officials told The Associated Press that the diversion scheme could be the largest-ever theft of humanitarian food. Since then, thousands of deaths linked to the food pause have been reported in Tigray.

The WFP restarted small-scale distributions in some areas of Tigray on July 31 as it tested "enhanced controls and measures." Last month, the leader of the Tigray region said 480 people had been arrested there over the theft. □

Drone attack kills 80 and wounds 240 at a packed Syrian military graduation ceremony, official says



In this photo provided by the Syrian Civil Defense White Helmets, a Syrian White Helmet civil defense worker runs at the site where a shell struck in the outskirts of the northern town of Jisr al-Shoughour, west of the city of Idlib, Syria, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023. (Syrian Civil Defense White Helmets via AP)

By Kareem Chehayeb and Albert aji

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A drone attack hit a crowded military graduation ceremony Thursday in the Syrian city of Homs, killing 80 people and wounding 240, the health minister said, in one of the deadliest recent attacks on

an army that's been fighting a civil war for more than a decade.

The strike killed civilians, including six children, as well as military personnel, and there were concerns the death toll could rise as many of the wounded were in serious condition, Health Minister Hassan al-

Ghabash said. Syria's military said in an earlier statement that drones laden with explosives targeted the ceremony packed with young officers and their families as it was wrapping up. Without naming any particular group, the military accused insurgents "backed by known international forces" of the attack and said "it will respond with full force and decisiveness to these terrorist organizations, wherever they exist." No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack as Syria endures its 13th year of conflict.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres "expressed deep concern" about the drone attack in Homs as well as reports of retaliatory shelling in northwest Syria, his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said. Guterres condemned all violence and called for a nationwide cease-fire, the spokesper-

son added. The military did not provide any casualty numbers, but Syria's state television said the government announced a three-day state of mourning starting Friday. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, and the pro-government Sham FM radio station reported the strikes earlier.

Syria's crisis started with peaceful protests against President Bashar Assad's government in March 2011 but quickly morphed into a full-blown civil war after the government's brutal crack-down on the protesters. The tide turned in Assad's favor against rebel groups in 2015, when Russia provided key military backing to Syria, as well as Iran and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

Although most Arab governments have restored ties with the government

in Damascus, Syria remains divided, with a northwest enclave under the control of al-Qaida-linked militants from the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham group and Turkish-backed opposition fighters. The country's northeast is under control of U.S.-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.

The city of Homs is deep in government-held territory, far from front lines where government and rebel forces routinely skirmish.

After the drone attack, Syrian government forces shelled villages in Idlib province, in the northwest. At least 10 civilians were wounded in the towns of Al-Nayrab and Sarmin east of Idlib city, according to opposition-held northwest Syria's civil defense organization known as the White Helmets. Government forces continue to shell other areas in the enclave. □

Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins



According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Anto-

nio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife

Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the

custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel



there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

Why You Should Not Miss Aruba's Free City Center Street Car Tour

ORANJESTAD - Aruba's City Center Street Car - or as we call it in Dutch; "Tram van Oranjestad" - is a single track tram line in Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba. It was inaugurated on 22 December 2012, being the first and so far the only passenger rail service on Aruba and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean. There are two trolleys, a single-deck one with 42 seats and a double-decker with 64 seats. The line was inspired by the popular battery-powered street-car operation at the Grove in Los Angeles, USA. Aruba's streetcars are powered by hydrogen fuel cells, which are charged by the island's year-round trade winds.

Caya Betico Croes, mostly referred to as our "main street" has been developed into a pollution-free pedestrian mall. The double-decker offers you a 360 degree view of the down town area with a picture perfect scenery of the island's clear blue skies. Who would not enjoy a ride on this beautiful and naturally air-conditioned vehicle? The tour consists of a total of 9 stops approximately 200 meters apart from each other; all stops are clearly marked.

The tram will bring you close to different museums, historical plazas, monuments, the Protestant church, Aruba's high-end mall, retail shops, and a variety of local and international cuisine restaurants.


The "I love Aruba" trademark also belongs to that list. The third stop on the route is close to a 5-minute walk to the famous Renaissance Marina showcasing luxurious yachts and Aruba's blue waters.

The "Tram van Oranjestad" starts from a balloon

loop near the Port of Call and serves the downtown area and ends at Plaza Nicky. The first ride starts at 10:00 am sharp with intervals of 25 minutes. The last trolley departs from the cruise port at 5:00pm.


Don't miss this tour of the beautiful Aruba's City Center- it is free for all! □





DON'T MISS!
SIGN UP FOR OUR LOYALTY CARD

New members sign up and receive **\$10**
Existing members **PLAY 5 POINTS**
and receive **\$10 FREE PLAY!**



J.E IRAUSQUIN BLVD 83, NOORD AT BARCELÓ ARUBA. T +297 2804000

Experience Unrivaed Excitement and Win Big at LIV Casino, Barceló Aruba

Oranjestad – Get ready to indulge in thrilling gaming experiences and a chance to strike it rich at LIV Casino, nestled within the luxurious Barceló Aruba resort. With a wide array of games and a captivating atmosphere, LIV Casino promises an unforgettable entertainment journey for visitors seeking excitement and good fortune.

LIV Casino boasts an impressive selection of 123 slot machines, each waiting to make someone a lucky winner. Among

these, 114 are Dollar machines and 9 are Florin machines cater to various preferences and betting levels, offering a diverse gaming experience that suits every player's style.

The casino is not just about slots – for those who relish the thrill of traditional table games, LIV Casino delivers on every front. Step up to the challenge at the Blackjack Table, where strategy meets chance, or take a spin at the Roulette Table for an electrifying game of luck. Additionally, the Three Card Poker Table

offers a unique blend of strategy and excitement, adding a new dimension to the gaming floor.

Adding to the anticipation, every table at LIV Casino features its own progressive jackpot, promising the potential for monumental winnings that could change a player's life in an instant.

The gaming action at LIV Casino comes alive from 11 AM to 3 AM, ensuring non-stop excitement throughout the day and into the night. For those looking to experience the thrill of table games, the tables are open from 4:30 PM until closing, inviting players to try their hand at a variety of games while enjoying the vibrant casino ambiance.

"Try your luck with us at LIV Casino at Barceló Aruba," encourages Marc Charley, Casino General Manager of LIV Casino. "We have crafted an environ-



ment where guests can immerse themselves in the thrill of gaming and experience the rush of winning big. Whether you're a seasoned player or a beginner, our diverse selection of games caters to all preferences."

LIV Casino at Barceló Aruba stands as a hub of entertainment, where visitors can not only try their luck but also revel in the world-class amenities and hospitality that the Barceló brand is renowned for.

About LIV Casino, Barceló Aruba:

LIV Casino, located within the lavish Barceló Aruba resort, offers a premier gaming experience on the stunning island of Aruba. With a wide range of slot machines and table games, as well as the allure of progressive jackpots, LIV Casino provides endless entertainment for both novice and seasoned players. The casino operates from 11 AM to 3 AM, while table games are available from 4:30 PM till closing. □



Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □

BINGO IS BACK EVERY THURSDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY!

50/30
Friday!

We're giving away
\$50 Free Slot Play
to lucky slot and table
game players **every**
30 minutes from
7pm to Midnight!

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO

Offering a wide variety of Retail & Dining Outlets,
Salon & Spa Services, Souvenirs and more.

Dunkin Donuts | Baskin Robbins | Fusion Piano & Wine Bar
Hungry Piranha | Twist of Flavors | Juan Valdez Café
The Brownstone Ribs & Seafood
Coming Soon: Auntie Anne's Pretzels

Alhambra
CASINO AND SHOPS

Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 583.5000 | casinoalhambra.com

Play Responsibly. Visit www.gamblersanonymous.org if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



Aruba Tourism Authority honors a loyal visitor at the Caribbean Palm Village!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize a Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. This Ambassador was respectfully honored with a certificate acknowledging her years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:

Goodwill Ambassador Mrs. Crystal Johnson from Pennsylvania, United States.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Caribbean Palm Village bestowed the honor certification to the honoree, presented her with gifts, and also thanked her for choosing Aruba as her favorite vacation destination, and as her home-away-from-home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by the honoree were:

Aruba's peacefulness
"I love the island"
Sightseeing
Aruba's beaches
"Golfing and horseback riding"



On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation

to the honoree for her continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

Aruba Tourism Authority honors loyal visitors at Renaissance Ocean Suites!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. This lovely couple was honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels

are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba Mr. Valenti Valerio & Mrs. Bianca Calbesi from Modena, Italy.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Renaissance Ocean Suites bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and also thanked them for

choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, and as their home-away-from-home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

Aruba's warm consistent weather all year round
Aruba's nice sandy beaches

Aruba's warm and friendly people
Aruba's safety
Aruba's cleanliness

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □



Free Glass of Wine
with this coupon!!

The Grand Fish
The Best Fresh Seafood on The Island

Open from 11am till 10pm Closed on Tuesday
Tel. +297-280.1515 | Taratata Road 15 unit #1

A brief history of the California Light House

(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no



hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum

in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters

wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □



Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it

had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in



Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel

Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

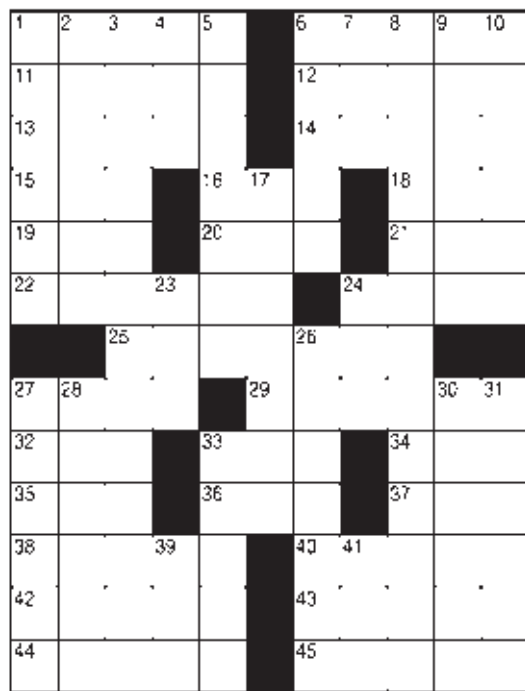
ACROSS

- 1 Concert venue
- 6 Component
- 11 Musical closes
- 12 Zeal
- 13 Sleeps in a tent
- 14 Third letter
- 15 Part of a student's email address
- 16 Lupino of film
- 18 High times
- 19 Confessional topic
- 20 Collins base
- 21 Originally called
- 22 Arizona city famed for its red rocks
- 24 Tacks on
- 25 Speeds up
- 27 — alone (do without help)
- 29 Without contract
- 32 Maximum amount
- 33 French friend
- 34 Mess up
- 35 Rap's — Nas X
- 36 Food additive letters

- 37 Compass dir.
- 38 Egg-shaped
- 40 Exodus figure
- 42 Squad car
- 43 "Give it —!"

DOWN

- 1 Get at
- 2 Concert worker
- 3 Famed mountain-eer
- 4 Catch some z's
- 5 Gives, as tasks
- 6 Heathen
- 7 Writer Levin
- 8 "The Faerie Queene" poet
- 9 Admitted for free
- 10 Wipes out
- 17 Some plankton
- 23 Feedback bit
- 24 Solution: Abbr.
- 26 Puzzles
- 27 Rubber's kin
- 28 Oscar winner Colman
- 30 Writer Hemingway
- 31 Waves' peaks
- 33 Church replies
- 39 Casual top
- 41 Spanish gold



10-6

AXYDI B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-6

CRYPTOQUOTE

B M D Y V M I Z Z G U U X Z U R V O

F U I . S Y F S U P P F H A U I D

D Y V O D H P O ? — H M P B N H X

W P U R V P A

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO EXPLORE THE DARKNESS TO GET BACK TO THE LIGHT AND GET BACK TO WHO YOU ARE. — JENNIFER LOPEZ



Yesterday's answer

- 7 Writer Levin
- 8 "The Faerie Queene" poet
- 9 Admitted for free
- 10 Wipes out
- 17 Some plankton
- 23 Feedback bit
- 24 Solution: Abbr.
- 26 Puzzles
- 27 Rubber's kin
- 28 Oscar winner Colman
- 30 Writer Hemingway
- 31 Waves' peaks
- 33 Church replies
- 39 Casual top
- 41 Spanish gold

Jury sees FTX ads with Tom Brady, Larry David, as fraud case is rolled out against Sam Bankman-Fried



FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried leaves Federal court, July 26, 2023, in New York. Jury selection begins Tuesday, Oct. 3 in a case in which the 31-year-old crypto mogul faces the possibility of a long prison term if convicted.

(AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File)

By Ken Sweet and Larry Neumeister
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Splashy advertisements featuring football star Tom Brady and comedian Larry David were among the first evidence seen by jurors Wednesday as prosecutors launched a historic fraud case against cryptocurrency maven Sam Bankman-

Fried, depicting him as a villain who portrayed himself as the Robin Hood of the crypto world.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Rehn said in his opening statement in Manhattan federal court that it was only a year ago that Bankman-Fried seemed to be "on top of the world," operating the multibillion dollar company he founded,

FTX, a seemingly pioneering cryptocurrency trading platform.

Rehn said the 31-year-old lived in a \$30 million apartment in the Bahamas, jetted around the world on private planes, socialized with celebrities and spent billions of dollars as he flaunted power and made big political donations to gain influence in Washington over cryptocurrency regulation.

The prosecutor, though, said that the son of two Stanford law professors was not as he seemed.

Adam Yedidia, one of the trial's first witnesses, supported the government's claims when he testified that he met Bankman-Fried and they became "long-time friends" when they were both students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before they worked and lived together in the Bahamas. □

Railroad unions want scrutiny of remote control trains after death of worker in Ohio railyard

By Josh Funk
Associated Press
OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Most

of the reaction to the pre-dawn death of a rail worker who mistakenly stepped in

front of two CSX locomotives last month has focused on whether the 19-year veteran should have seen the train coming and not on the actions of a worker who could hardly see the front of the locomotives he or she was operating using a remote control.

Some railroad unions want more scrutiny of the safety of remote control operations major railroads have used for years in and around railyards without significant problems. Remote control helps limit costs by using less experienced workers to move locomotives that help assemble trains a task that once required licensed engineers who are among the highest-paid rail workers. □



The CSX logo is affixed on a surface, July 15, 2013, Nashville, Tenn. (AP Photo/Mark Humphrey, File)

Honey Dolls
MASSAGE AND ESCORT SERVICE

Beautiful Latin Girls
Pick-up & Delivery

Serving Men - Couple - Women - All Genders

+297 565-9535

WWW.PLEASUREINARUBA.COM

24/7

Meta and X questioned by lawmakers over lack of rules against AI-generated political deepfakes

By Matt O'Brien
Associated Press

(AP) - Deepfakes generated by artificial intelligence are having their moment this year, at least when it comes to making it look, or sound, like celebrities did something uncanny. Tom Hanks hawking a dental plan. Pope Francis wearing a stylish puffer jacket. U.S. Sen. Rand Paul sitting on the Capitol steps in a red bathrobe.

But what happens next year ahead of a U.S. presidential election?

Google was the first big tech company to say it would impose new labels on deceptive AI-generated political advertisements that could fake a candidate's voice or actions. Now some U.S. lawmakers are calling on social media platforms X, Facebook and Instagram to explain why they aren't doing the same.

Two Democratic members of Congress sent a letter Thursday to Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and X CEO Linda Yaccarino expressing "serious concerns" about the emergence of AI-generated political ads on their platforms and asking each to explain any rules they're crafting to curb the harms to free and fair elections.

"They are two of the largest platforms and voters deserve to know what guardrails are being put in place," said U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota in an interview with The Associated Press. "We are simply asking them, 'Can't you do this? Why aren't you doing this?' It's clearly technologically possible."

The letter to the executives from Klobuchar and U.S. Rep. Yvette Clarke of New York warns: "With the 2024 elections quickly approaching, a lack of transparency about this type of content in political ads could lead to a dangerous deluge of election-related misinformation and disinformation across your platforms - where voters often turn to learn about candi-



Rep. Yvette Clarke of New York speaks at a news conference in Washington, Nov. 4, 2021.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

dates and issues."

X, formerly Twitter, and Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, didn't respond to requests for comment Thursday. Clarke and Klobuchar asked the executives to respond to their questions by Oct. 27.

The pressure on the social media companies comes as both lawmakers are helping to lead a charge to regulate AI-generated political ads. A House bill introduced by Clarke earlier this year would amend a federal election law to require labels when election advertisements contain AI-generated images or video.

"I think that folks have a First Amendment right to

put whatever content on social media platforms that they're moved to place there," Clarke said in an interview Thursday. "All I'm saying is that you have to make sure that you put a disclaimer and make sure that the American people are aware that it's fabricated."

For Klobuchar, who is sponsoring companion legislation in the Senate that she aims to get passed before the end of the year, "that's like the bare minimum" of what is needed. In the meantime, both lawmakers said they hope that major platforms take the lead on their own, especially given the disarray that has left the House of Representatives without an elected

speaker.

Google has already said that starting in mid-November it will require a clear disclaimer on any AI-generated election ads that alter people or events on YouTube and other Google products. Google's policy applies both in the U.S. and in other countries where the company verifies election ads. Facebook and Instagram parent Meta doesn't have a rule specific to AI-generated political ads but has a policy restricting "faked, manipulated or transformed" audio and imagery used for misinformation.

A more recent bipartisan Senate bill, co-sponsored by Klobuchar, Republican Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri and others, would go farther in banning "materially deceptive" deepfakes relating to federal candidates, with exceptions for parody and satire. □



Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday



HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Sta. Anna: Tel. 586 8181
Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 4833

Women in Difficulties

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



facebook.com/arubatoday/

Tony! Toni! Toné! say reuniting after 25 years 'Feels Good' and they're working on something new

By Gary Gerard Hamilton
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — D'Wayne Wiggins and Timothy Christian Riley didn't realize that Raphael Saadiq was planting the seeds for a Tony! Toni! Toné! reunion when he arranged a photoshoot earlier this year.

"He said a few times before, so we never paid that much attention to it until this fool put up a big-ass billboard in Oakland, and I had to see it through social media," said vocalist and bass guitarist Wiggins, who wondered if the image was Photoshopped. "I thought someone was playing tricks, morphing our picture." Saadiq, the lead singer and guitarist of the beloved R&B group, gathered the trio together, free of any outside influence.

"I didn't tell any of the managers or team or anybody because I just wanted it to be us. ... I wanted to be in a room where the only power structure was one, two and three," said Saadiq of his bandmates who are also family: Wiggins is his brother and Riley is their cousin. "We have to be us first before we could talk to anybody because that's what happened the last time." Cut to last month, when



D'Wayne Wiggins, from left, Raphael Saadiq and Timothy Christian Riley of Tony! Toni! Toné! pose for a portrait on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023, in New York. The group kicked off a tour last month, their first featuring the three original members in 25 years.

(AP Photo/Gary Gerard Hamilton)

Tony! Toni! Toné! kicked off their Raphael Saadiq Revisits Tony! Toni! Toné! Just Me And You Tour 2023, the first road trip featuring the three original members in nearly 30 years.

"It's been really cool, like rehearsals and the actual shows, just playing together again on a stage," said Riley, who plays drums and keyboard. "A lot of times, we do production and studio work. But just actually

being together, you feel the energy, you feel the love."

But that's not all: the Tonyies, as they call themselves, are currently planning a new project.

"There's going to be another album ... but I thought we need to really hone in on what we're doing for touring and then go home and then take like two days off, and then start on the album," said Saadiq, who

once served as a member of Prince's touring band.

"We got a lot of material and now we just want to make sure that we put out the right energy through our music," added Wiggins. Blending R&B, jazz and traces of gospel, the Oakland, California, natives burst onto the music scene with their 1988 debut album, "Who?" with songs like "Baby Doll" and "Little Walter." But it was their

1990 New Jack Swing-infused "Feels Good" record that gave the group mainstream success, peaking at No. 9 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart.

They released two more studio projects together, with party hits like "Let's Get Down," featuring DJ Quik, and timeless slow jams including "Whatever You Want," "It Never Rains (In Southern California)," "(Lay Your Head on My) Pillow" and "Anniversary," a standard in the Black music romance canon.

"I've always wanted a song like 'Chestnuts' like Nat King Cole, something that everybody played at some point, and 'Anniversary' was that type of song. I knew the subject matter wasn't one that I thought was dated, but you couldn't tell me that it was going to be this type of song," said Saadiq. "When it comes on and couples grab each other, we know that it took on a whole different life that we couldn't see." The blood relatives also couldn't predict how their success would affect their relationship. The Tonyies went their separate ways after their fourth album, 1996's platinum-selling "House of Music." □

'Saturday Night Live' returns after strike, with Pete Davidson and Bad Bunny slated to host

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Live from New York ... it's the return of 'Saturday Night Live' after last season was cut short because of the writers strike.

The long-running sketch comedy show will premiere Season 49 on Oct. 14, NBC announced Wednesday. Former cast member Pete Davidson will host, making good on a plan to have him host last May. The comedian will be joined by first-time musical guest Ice Spice.

The following week, Bad Bunny will pull double duty

as host and musical guest. While the Grammy winner

has performed on the show before, it'll be his hosting

debut.

The entire cast from Season 48 will return, along with one new addition: Chloe Troast, as a featured player. Davidson had been set to host May 6, alongside musical guest Lil Uzi Vert, but his episode was the first to be cut after the writers strike started just days before. The writers strike was declared over Sept. 26 after Writers Guild of America board members approved a contract agreement with studios.

While Hollywood actors are still on strike for most television and theatrical work,

the "SNL" cast can resume performing as variety shows operate under a different contract.

Other late-night shows like "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon", "Jimmy Kimmel Live!", "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" and "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" have also returned.

"I'm excited to do some more 'SNL,'" cast member James Austin Johnson, known for impressions of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, told The Associated Press earlier this week. "It moves quick." □



Pete Davidson attends the premiere of "Meet Cute," Sept. 20, 2022, in New York.

(Photo by Evan Agostini/Invision/AP, File)

Billy Eppler quits as Mets general manager, three days after David Stearns was hired above him

By Ronald Blum
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Billy Eppler quit as New York Mets general manager Thursday, three days after David Stearns was hired above him as the team's first president of baseball operations.

Eppler's decision continues an overhaul that followed a fourth-place NL East finish for a team with World Series expectations. Owner Steve Cohen fired manager Buck Showalter on Sunday, saying Stearns deserved to bring in his own manager.

"I wanted David to have a clean slate and that meant me stepping down," Eppler said in a statement released by the team.

Cohen had long talked about hiring a president of baseball operations above Eppler and had said baseball operations leadership had become too large a job for one person. Eppler attended the Monday



New York Mets general manager Billy Eppler speaks to reporters during a news conference at Citi Field, Jan. 31, 2023, in New York. Eppler quit as the Mets general manager on Thursday, Oct. 5, days after David Stearns was hired above him as the team's first president of baseball operations. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File)

news conference at Citi Field to introduce Stearns, who had discussed working in tandem with Eppler.

"He decided it is in every-

one's best interest to fully hand over the leadership of baseball operations to David Stearns," Cohen said in a statement.

The 48-year-eppler worked in scouting and player development for the Colorado Rockies from 2000-04, then joined the the New

York Yankees. He was director of professional scouting from 2006-11 and an assistant GM under Brian Cashman from 2012-14.

Eppler became GM of the Los Angeles Angels from 2015-20, then was fired after five losing seasons. The Mets gave him a four-year contract in November 2021 to become their fifth head of baseball operations in 13 months. He signed ace Max Scherzer and outfielder Starling Marte among his first moves, and the Mets went 101-61 in 2022. While they led the NL East for all but six days, they fell from first at the season's end and lost to San Diego in the NL Wild Card Series.

New York boosted payroll to a major league record \$355 million at the start of the 2023 season, adding pitchers Justin Verlander, Kodai Senga and José Quintana, but faded by midsummer, traded veterans and finished 75-87. □

Uihlein, Soderberg and Arnaus share lead at Dunhill Links Championship as Ryder Cup winners return

Associated Press

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland (AP)

— Peter Uihlein was in the company of some of golf's top newsmakers on Thursday, and made some news of his own with an 8-under 64 giving him a share of the lead in the Dunhill Links Championship.

Uihlein, one of four LIV Golf players in the European tour event, played with amateur partner Yasir Al-Rumayyan, the governor of Saudi Arabia's national wealth fund (PIF) that backs LIV Golf.

Al-Rumayyan is now is negotiations with the PGA Tour and European tour to create a separate company that would combine the tour's commercial interests. Also playing in their group on the Old Course at St. Andrews was R&A CEO Martin Slumbers, whose pro partner was Jordan Smith. Slumbers was seen with Al-

Rumayyan during the British Open this summer. Slumbers was asked during The Open if he would entertain PIF money for events run by the R&A. "If I'm very open, we are and do and continue to do, talk to various potential sponsors," Slumbers said in July. "We have a number of large corporate

partners that help us make this thing happen. I think the world has changed in the last year. It's not just golf. You're seeing it in football. You're seeing it in F1. You're seeing it in cricket. I'm sure tennis won't be that far behind. "The world of sport has changed dramatically in the last 12 months, and it

is not feasible for the R&A or golf to just ignore what is a societal change on a global basis. We will be considering within all the parameters that we look at all the options that we have."

Uihlein shared the lead with Sebastian Soderberg and Adri Arnaus at the pro-am that takes place at St. Andrews, Kingsbarns and Carnoustie. The final round is on the Old Course.

LIV Golf players in the field, including Louis Oosthuizen and Talor Gooch, were either not European tour members or had resigned their membership before playing in a LIV Golf event. They are sponsor invitations and faced no sanctions from the tour.

Of greater notoriety were Matt Fitzpatrick (67), Tommy Fleetwood (69) and Robert MacIntyre (70), all of them at Carnoustie just four days after they helped Eu-

rope to an emotional and thorough victory over the United States in the Ryder Cup outside Rome.

History came from David Howell, who made his 722nd appearance on the European tour to break the record of Miguel Angel Jimenez.

Six of the best nine scores in the first round came at St. Andrews, including the rounds of Uihlein and Soderberg that featured fast starts in good conditions.

Soderberg birdied seven of his first eight holes to go out in 29, while all eight of the birdies by Uihlein who plays on the LIV Golf circuit were in the first 14 holes of the American's bogey-free round.

Arnaus played at Carnoustie, where he birdied five straight holes from No. 17 after starting at the 10th, and also eagled the par-5 14th hole. □



Robert MacIntyre on the 18th hole during day one of the 2023 Alfred Dunhill Links Championship at St Andrews, Thursday Oct. 5, 2023.

(Steve Welsh/PA via AP)

All Blacks finish Rugby World Cup pool play with 73-0 win over Uruguay

Associated Press

LYON, France (AP) — New Zealand overcame a sluggish start to beat Uruguay 73-0 in its final pool match at the Rugby World Cup on Thursday. But the All Blacks' performance was less than the polished quarterfinal rehearsal they were hoping for. New Zealand took 20 minutes to score the first try of the match and for much of the first quarter was put under pressure by Uruguay, which rose to the occasion of the first official test match between the teams. The All Blacks recovered to score four tries in the second quarter and lead 26-0 by halftime. But they will look back on their shaky start with concern as they were often turned over at breakdowns by Uruguay and at times looked stretched in defense. Still, the All Blacks finished with 11 tries including a second-half hat trick to winger Leicester Fainga'anuku. After their first up loss to France, they beat Namibia 71-0, Italy 96-17 and added another 73 points on Thursday. Both teams had early tries disallowed: The All Blacks twice, to Cam Roigard and Damian McKenzie, and Uruguay a crowd-



New Zealand's players perform Haka ahead of the Rugby World Cup Pool A match between New Zealand and Uruguay at the OL Stadium, in Lyon, France Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023.

(AP Photo/Pavel Golovkin)

pleasing effort which was finished by Manuel Ardao, who was just taken into touch in a covering tackle by Will Jordan. New Zealand's solid scrum gave it a foothold in the match and scrumhalf Roigard again played a leading role, staking a claim for a bench role in the quarterfinals squad. McKenzie also shone from fullback and his sublime piece of skill to create a try for Jordan was the All Blacks' highlight of the first

half. He kicked ahead and when the ball bounced, he balanced precariously close to the touchline and swept the ball one-handed to Jordan. By halftime, the All Blacks had control of possession and tries came more regularly. They were able to lift the tempo of the match as they had tried but mostly failed to do in the first half as referee Wayne Barnes often found fault with their breakdown technique. With momentum, the All

Blacks scored first-half tries through McKenzie, Richie Mo'unga, Jordan and Roigard and started the second half with tries to prop Fletcher Newell his first in tests a second to McKenzie and Fainga'anuku's first. But when they ran on their bench from 50 minutes or so their cohesion again began to fray and the match became scrappy. More than 10 minutes elapsed between their seventh try and their eighth, a second to Jordan again from

strong scrummaging. Fainga'anuku completed his late hat trick with tries in the 68th and 78th minutes and prop Tamaiti Williams also celebrated his first test try while New Zealand cycled through three goal-kickers Mo'unga, McKenzie and Beauden Barrett who all kicked conversions. At the end of their pool matches and ahead of a potential quarterfinal against Ireland, the All Blacks will reflect carefully on several concerning aspects of Thursday's match. They can't afford a slow start, a lack of organization at the breakdown or the poor skill execution that plagued them early in this match. The date with Ireland still depends on the outcome of Friday's final Pool A match between France and Italy and anticipates a French win. There still were high points on Thursday. All Blacks lock Sam Whitelock became only the second male international after Wales' Alun Wyn Jones to play 150 tests. All of New Zealand's front-liners came through unscathed and there still is strong competition for some places in the quarterfinal lineup. □

Daiki Hashimoto of Japan defends men's gymnastics title. American Fred Richards finishes third

Associated Press

(AP) - Japanese star Daiki Hashimoto defended his title at the world gymnastics

championships on Thursday, overcoming an early mistake on floor exercise to become the first athlete to



Japan's Daiki Hashimoto reacts after his performance on the parallel bars during the men's all-round final at the Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Antwerp, Belgium, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023.

(AP Photo/Virginia Mayo)

win back-to-back world all-around titles in eight years. The 22-year-old Hashimoto posted a total of 86.132, over a point clear of Illia Kovtun of Ukraine at 84.998. American teenager Fred Richards, a sophomore at Michigan, earned a surprising bronze at 84.332. Hashimoto finished third in qualifying behind teammates Kenta Chiba and Kazuma Kaya, meaning he did not automatically earn a berth in the finals because of rules that limit each country to two entries. Hashimoto ended up taking Kaya's spot, a decision the Japanese delegation made unanimously in deference to Hashimoto, who won the all-around

gold at the Tokyo Olympics. Hashimoto struggled on the floor exercise to start the finals, his lone misstep on a night in which he showed again that he is the rightful heir atop the sport following countryman Kohei Uchimura, a two-time Olympic and six-time world champion. Hashimoto became the first man to win consecutive world all-around titles since Uchimura went back-to-back in 2014 and '15. Richards became the first U.S. male gymnast to finish in the top three in the all-around since Jonathan Horton earned a bronze in 2010. He did it despite a mistake on high bar during the final rotation that sent him tumbling to the mat.

Richard collected himself to finish his routine and appeared to be resigned to finishing off the podium, telling a nearby camera, "It's part of the journey." Just not the end of it. Miscues by the others hoping to stand with Hashimoto during the awards ceremony namely Chiba and Sun Wei of China opened the door for Richards to become the youngest American man ever to win an individual medal at worlds. And it came two days after Richards helped the U.S. win bronze in the team finals, the first time the Americans have finished in the top three in a major international competition since 2014. □